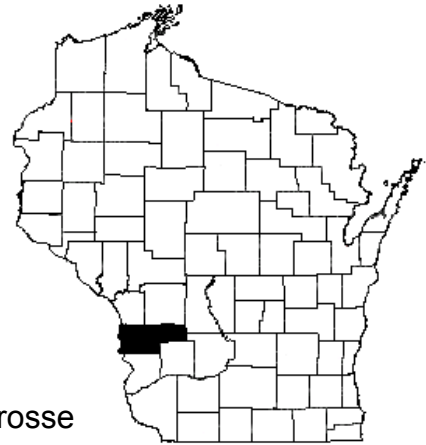




# Fish and Wildlife Conservation

How Fish and Wildlife Dollars Are Used in Your Backyard

## Vernon County



### **County characteristics**

- 795 sq. mi.
- Cash grain and dairy agriculture present on ridgetops and valleys; extensive woodlands dominate steep hillsides and stream corridors
- Waters: warm-water streams; 7 lakes including 2 exceptional resource waters; headwaters of high quality trout streams
- Experiencing rapid residential growth in areas adjacent to La Crosse metro area
- There are 28,056 residents living in Vernon County



### **State Land Open to Hunting and Fishing**

- 14877 acres of state land including wildlife and fisheries areas, state natural areas, Wildcat Mountain State Park, and the Kickapoo Valley Reserve
- 14,600 acres open to hunting

Locate DNR properties at:

[http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/facilities/dnr\\_lands\\_mapping.html](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/facilities/dnr_lands_mapping.html)

### **Fish and Wildlife Staff serving you**

DNR Service Center supporting Vernon Co:

3550 Morman Coulee Rd. LaCrosse 54601

3 Customer Service staff located at service center.

- 1 Wildlife Biologist and 1 Wildlife Technician; 1 Fisheries Biologist; 2 Conservation Wardens (1

vacancy) stationed in Vernon Co.; Field station, 220 Airport Rd., Viroqua, 54665.

- 1 half-time Fisheries Biologist and 1 quarter-time Fisheries Technician on Mississippi River
- Some staff also serves portions of Crawford, La Crosse, and Monroe counties.

### **Activities Funded by Your Hunting and Fishing Dollars**

- Establish and maintain forest, grassland and wetland habitat for ducks, pheasants, wild turkey, deer, and numerous other wildlife species on public and private lands
- Restore 500 acres per year of Mississippi River habitat; 11,800 completed since 1989
- Continue to work with federal agencies to leverage over \$500,000/yr for Mississippi River habitat work using \$38,000/yr state money
- Wardens routinely arrest deer poachers who are drawn to the area for large-racked deer common in the area
- Enforce game and fish regulations on the Mississippi River.
- Control exotic and invasive species such as purple loosestrife, leafy spurge, wild parsnip, spotted knapweed, thistle, garlic mustard, and boxelder to assure high-quality native habitat.
- Manage DNR land by posting public hunting and access sites, build and maintain parking areas.

- Monitor local wildlife populations of ducks, geese, pheasants, grouse, woodcock, deer, frogs, songbirds, and eagles.
- Respond to wildlife damage and nuisance complaints and monitor wildlife diseases including CWD and West Nile Virus.
- Evaluate proposed projects for environmental impacts, work to keep habitats intact and functioning for fish and wildlife.
- Provide educational programs for schools, conservation organizations and civic groups
- On the Mississippi River, continue to add at least 500 restored acres per year to the 11,800 acres completed since 1989.
- Continue to work with federal agencies to leverage over \$500,000/Yr for Mississippi River habitat work using \$38,000/Yr of state money
- Continue to leverage \$430,000/Yr in federal money to monitor fish, invertebrates, plants and water quality on the Mississippi River.
- Trout habitat restoration projects (funded by the Trout Stamp)
- Lake and stream fisheries surveys (for inventories, stream classification, habitat and stocking evaluations)



Stoddard Bay, Pool 8 Islands, Phase II. 20 Dec. 2003. View from S. WDNR Photo.

## ***Vernon County Conservation Snapshots***

### ***Fish & Wildlife Stocking Summary***

- 4 lakes and ponds stocked with 5,600 brook and rainbow trout
- 33 streams stocked with 70,405 wild brook and brown trout
- 1 Public Hunting Ground stocked with 900-2000 pheasants annually

## ***County Success Stories***

- Site of the first wild turkey releases in WI, leading to the expansion of turkeys throughout the state
- Blue ribbon trout streams throughout the county attract anglers from numerous other states
- Habitat project on the Mississippi River near Stoddard increased panfish numbers 550%
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## ***Statewide challenges to maintaining your hunting and fishing opportunities***

- Without a fee increase as proposed by Governor Doyle, the Department of Natural Resources will be forced make numerous cuts in:
  - Fish and wildlife stocking programs: Conservation law enforcement; Public hunting acres; Fish and wildlife field biologists and Customer services
- Keeping upland, shoreline and aquatic habitat intact and functional
- Multiple user conflicts - Increasing pressure on public lands
- Rapid growth – urban sprawl
- Nuisance wildlife and invasion by non-native species
- Disease management
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***Want to Learn More? Go to [dnr.wi.gov/invest](http://dnr.wi.gov/invest)***

March 2005